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# THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

Ἡ εἰς τὸν Θεὸν ἀνὰ ἡμῶν, ἀγῶν ριόδῳν ἀνὰ τὴν θαλάσσαν τοῦ ναυαγίου.

LUKE ii. 14.

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## RULE OF FAITH.

(Continued from p. 63.)

IN our June number we stated some of the arguments on which the United Church of England and Ireland relies in support of her Rule of Faith. We showed, in the first place, that, from the very nature and design of Holy Scripture, it is in the highest degree probable that it contains *all*, and not merely some, of the truths necessary to salvation. We adduced, in the second place, a few of the numerous passages in which the Bible bears testimony to its own sufficiency. The third head of our proof related to the inadequacy of oral tradition as a vehicle for the unimpaired transmission of doctrinal truths. So obvious and indisputable, indeed, is this last point, that Bellarmine, and, after him, many of the ablest Roman Catholic controversialists maintain, that by the *unwritten* word of God it is not meant that the word is written *nowhere*, but that it was not committed to writing by the Apostles and other inspired men who first preached it; that, although not recorded by inspired penmen, it is to be found deposited in the writings of the early Fathers of the Church, and embodied in the acts and definitions of General Councils. It soon, however, became apparent that this basis of Tradition was not sufficiently large and stable for the vast superstructure which it was made to sustain. With respect to the ancient Fathers it was undeniable that, upon the one hand, some even of the most eminent of them had put forward assertions clearly at variance with fact and Scripture <sup>(1)</sup>, so that any dogma resting on their au-

thority alone must necessarily be attended with some degree of uncertainty: whilst, upon the other hand, the closest examination of their writings failed to detect any clear recognition upon their part of the characteristic doctrines of the modern Church of Rome. Again, in reference to General Councils, it was equally incontrovertible, in the first place, that "forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed by the Spirit and Word of God, they may err, and sometimes have erred even in things pertaining to God" <sup>(2)</sup>; and, in the second place, that the acts of the universally-acknowledged Ecumenical Councils are utterly silent about any *essential* doctrines, the proofs of which are not to be found in Scripture. The *written* evidence of Christian antiquity being thus found to furnish insufficient proof of such doctrines, it became absolutely necessary to call in the aid of the great "living witness," the infallible Church, by whose interposition every embarrassing difficulty is easily conjured away. Thus, then, in addition to, or rather instead of, the troublesome realities of documents which cannot be tortured into yielding a sense that their authors never intended them to convey, we are presented, whenever it is convenient to do so, with the pleasing vision of an ever-flowing stream of Church tradition, traversing with unsullied purity the foul corruptions of many a century of darkness, ignorance, and crime <sup>(3)</sup>: of a sacred deposit transmitted unimpaired,

for having provided us with a *written* standard of truth, by which the traditions extant even in the immediately post-apostolic age may be tested? The last instance, in illustration of this subject, to which we shall refer, is the Epistle attributed to the Apostle Barnabas. If, as several of the early Fathers—including Origen, Clem. Alex., Eusebius, and Jerome—believed, Barnabas were the author of this work, no stronger evidence can be adduced of the danger of admitting any addition, from *whatever* source, to the written oracles of truth; because it contains so much at variance with sober reason and the acknowledged Word of God, that we cannot, upon any sound principles of criticism, admit its inspiration. On the other hand, if it be a forgery, it yet imposed on some of the most learned and critical of the Fathers; and what presumption is there that some or all of the (non-Scriptural) traditions, or traditional interpretations of Scripture, for which Apostolic authority is claimed, may not be derived from sources just as little entitled to credit as this pretended Epistle of Barnabas?

(2) Art. xxi. of the Church of England.

(3) Baronius gives a fearful description of the darkness and wickedness of the tenth century, of which the following passages may serve as a specimen:—"A new age begins, which, from its asperity and barrenness of good, has been wont to be called the iron age; from the deformity of its overflowing wickedness, the leaden age; and from its poverty of writers, the dark age. Standing on the threshold of which we have deemed it necessary to premise something, lest the weak-minded should be at all scandalized if he should at any time happen to behold the abomination of desolation in the Temple. . . . The case is plainly such, that scarcely any one can believe—nay, scarcely ever shall believe—except he see it with his own eyes and handle it with his own hands, what unworthy, foul, and deformed—yea, moreover, execrable and abominable things the sacred Apostolic See, upon whose hinge the universal Catholic Church turns, has been compelled to suffer. . . . Oh, shame! oh, grief! how many monsters, horrible to be seen, were intruded by them [secular princes] into that seat which is to be revered by angels? How many tragedies were consummated? With what filth was it her fate to be besprinkled, who was herself without spot or wrinkle? With what stench to be infected, with what loathsome impurities to be defiled, and by these to be blackened with perpetual infamy?" (Novum inchoatur sæculum, quod sua asperitate et boni sterilitate ferreum, malique exundantis deformitate plumbeum, atque inopia Scripturæ appellari consuevit obscurum. In cuius limine constituti, præfari aliquod necessarium duximus, ne quid scandali pusillus animo patiaturs, si quando videre contigerit abominationem desolationis in templo. . . . Est plane ut vix aliquis credat, immo nec vix quidem sit crediturus, nisi suis, ipse inspicat oculis manibusque contrectet, quam indigna, quamque turpia atque deformia, execranda insuper et abominanda sit coacta pati, sacrosancta, apostolica sedes, in cuius cardine universa Ecclesia Catholica vertitur. . . . Quot tunc ab eis, pro pudor! pro dolor! in eandem sedem angelis reverendam, visu horrenda intrusa sint monstra? Quot consummate sint tragediæ? Quibus tunc ipsam sine macula et sine ruga contigit aspergi sordibus, putoribus infici, inquinari spurcitibus, ex his perpetua infamia denigrari?"—Ann. Eccles. An. 900. And, again, the same historian writes—"What was then the face of the holy Roman Church? How most foul! when

from age to age, by an undefined and abstract community, the individual members of which are admitted to have been subject to the ordinary infirmities of humanity. The most eminent Fathers, the holiest Popes, the greatest and most pious Bishops assembled in the most legitimate Councils, have all confessedly erred in matters of greater or less moment, but this, we are called upon to believe, does not, in the least, invalidate the authority of the Divine Traditions which have been transmitted through them, and other less distinguished members of the Catholic Church. Nay, we are told, it is not even necessary that the Church of any particular age should be conscious of the inestimable value of the verities committed to her keeping. It is quite competent to the Church or its equally infallible Head upon earth, whenever a fitting occasion occurs, to elevate to the rank of an article of faith any of the truths of which she was before the unconscious depositary <sup>(4)</sup>. Truly, the infallibility of the Church has many an arduous duty imposed upon it; but we question if, in the whole range of its Herculean labours, it has a more difficult task to sustain than this, scilicet, to impart to dogmas, which, if judged by the ordinary rules of evidence, are either wholly unconnected with Christian antiquity, or, at best, have a very questionable parentage there, the character of *Divine truths*, communicated by the lips of our Lord himself or his inspired messengers: especially when these dogmas are not only (as is supposed) *independent* of Scripture, but actually *opposed* either to its letter or its spirit. If, then, doctrines of faith concern a man's eternal welfare, and if, with respect to them, mistake no less than wilful error may be fraught with infinite danger, it is surely the solemn duty of every Roman Catholic to pause and satisfy himself that in resting his faith in dogmas, not proveable by Scripture, upon the *assumed infallibility of the Church*, he may not in reality be building, like the foolish man in our Saviour's parable, his house upon the sand—"The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall thereof."—Matt. vii. 27 <sup>(5)</sup>.

The fourth class of arguments by which we proposed to establish the grand principle of the sufficiency of Holy Scripture for salvation, is the recorded testimony of the Fathers and Doctors of the Catholic Church. The consent of so many of the most distinguished ornaments of the

harlots, at once most powerful and most base, ruled at Rome; at whose will sees were changed, bishops were presented, and—what is horrid to hear, and unutterable—pseudo-Pontiffs, their paramours, were intruded into the See of Peter, who are enrolled in the catalogue of Roman Pontiffs only for the sake of marking the times." (Quæ tunc facies sanctæ ecclesiæ Romanæ! quam fœdissima! cum Rome dominarentur potentissimæ æque ac sordidissimæ meretrices, quarum arbitrio mutarentur sedes, darentur episcopi, et quod auditu horrendum et infandum est, intruderentur in sedem Petri eorum amasii, pseudo Pontifices, qui non sint nisi ad consignanda tantum tempora in catalogo Romanorum Pontificum scripti.—Ann. Eccles. Ann. 912.) When so eminent a Roman Catholic historian as Baronius was compelled to make such admissions as the above, we may well give thanks to the great Head of the Church that the faith once delivered to the saints has not been left to the safe custody of Church Tradition.

(4) A remarkable instance of this is furnished by the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, which has at length been declared, by the successor of St. Peter, to be an Article of Faith. —*Vide CATHOLIC LAYMAN*, No. ii., p. 19. So difficult, indeed, is it to discover many of the peculiar tenets of the Roman Catholic religion in the writings or traditions of the earlier ages of the Church, that recourse was had, at the Council of Florence (1438), to the theory of *development*, in order to escape from the charge of introducing novelties into the dogmatic teaching of the Church. This theory was revived in more modern times, by the Jesuit *Feijerius*, and in our own day has been advocated by the celebrated Bavarian professor Möhler; and still more elaborately and boldly by Mr. Newman. How far Mr. Newman's doctrine is received by the Church to which he now belongs is uncertain. Dr. Wiseman and the *Dublin Review* warmly espouse it: whilst, on the other hand, the highest authorities of the Roman Catholic Church in America denounce it as subversive of the Catholic faith, and as a *denial* of its own infallibility. Peter himself has not yet spoken.

(5) The general question of the infallibility of the Church is one into which we cannot, of course, enter here. That important controversy which has already been touched on, will be hereafter discussed at length in this Journal.

(1) One or two well-known examples of this may not be uninteresting. Irenæus, the famous Bishop of Lyons, towards the close of the second century, states, as a positive fact, that our Lord's public ministry took place between the fortieth and fiftieth year of his age. This assertion he defends, partly, by inferences from John viii. 57, 58, but chiefly by an appeal to the testimony of the elders who had met John in Asia, and had heard the fact from him and from others of the Apostles.—Contr. Hæc. ii. 22. But if this assertion, vouched for by what seems to be such unimpeachable testimony, be true, then the whole Christian world, of earlier and later ages alike, is mistaken, and the chronology of the New Testament becomes involved in inextricable difficulties. Can Roman Catholics adduce any dogma, not contained expressly or by implication in Scripture, which is supported by an appeal to Apostolic authority more positive and more circumstantial than that by which this false assertion of one of the earliest of the Fathers is sustained? Again, it is well known that most of the early traditions preserved by Irenæus were contained in a lost work of Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, who had seen and heard the Apostle John, and who, as he himself tells us (Euseb. E. H. iii. 39), took particular pains to inform himself of the authenticity of what he reports. The following is a specimen of the discourses of our Lord, concerning His kingdom, which that work contains:—"The days shall come in which vines shall grow, each vine with ten thousand boughs, each bough with ten thousand branches, each branch with ten thousand twigs, each twig with ten thousand grapes, each grape containing twenty-five measures of wine. And when any of the saints shall take a bunch, another [bunch] shall cry out—'I am a better bunch, take me, through me bless the Lord.'"—Iren. Contr. Hæc. v. 33. If it be little short of blasphemy to ascribe such words to Him who spake as never man spake, is it not equally plain that we are bound to feel deeply grateful to God

Church during a long succession of ages, beginning with the immediately post-apostolic times, is regarded by us, Protestants, as a valuable corroboration of the conclusion which, however, we deem sufficiently established by the testimony of Scripture itself, and by the reason of the case.\* But to Roman Catholics, who professedly rest much of their belief on the authority of the Fathers, the argument now under consideration ought to be conclusive. We say then, that a chain of evidence, bearing on the supreme importance and sufficiency of the written Word of God, can be drawn out from the works of the great Church-Fathers, proving incontestably that the doctrine of the modern Church of Rome, regarding the insufficiency of Scripture, and the co-ordinate authority of an independent Tradition, was utterly unknown to the ancient Church either of the East or West. To exhibit all these testimonies in detail would far transcend our limits: we shall, therefore, content ourselves with adducing a few of them as specimens of the whole.

We begin with IRENEUS, the Bishop of Lyons, and the disciple and friend of Polycarp, who again had been the companion and disciple of the Apostle John. This Father represents the opinion of both the Eastern and Western Churches towards the end of the second century. Disputing against the Gnostic heretics, who denied the perfection and sufficiency of Scripture, and maintained that the truth could not be discovered from it by those who were ignorant of Tradition (\*), Irenæus says—"We ought to leave such things as these to God, who also made us, most rightly knowing that the Scriptures indeed are perfect, as having been dictated by the word of God and his Spirit" (7). Again—"For we have become acquainted with the dispensation of our salvation through no others than those through whom the Gospel has come to us: which they then indeed preached, but afterwards, by the will of God, delivered to us in the Scriptures, to be the foundation and pillar of our faith" (8). The last phrase, it will be remembered, is the very one applied by St. Paul to the Church—1 Tim. iii. 15. Irenæus, accordingly, here distinctly implies, that it was by the custody of the Sacred Scriptures that the Church was to sustain her office as "the pillar and ground of the truth." Once more—"Read diligently the Gospel given unto us by the Apostles, and read diligently the prophets, and ye shall find the general mode of action, and the whole doctrine, and the whole passion of our Lord predicted in them" (9).

We come next to TERTULLIAN, who flourished a few years later than Irenæus—that is to say, about the end of the second century. This great writer, whom Vincentius of Lerins pronounces (Commonit., c. 24) to be, "apud Latinos facile princeps," thus expresses himself regarding Scripture, when arguing against the heretic Hermogenes, who maintained the eternity of matter—"I adore the fulness of Scripture, which manifests to me the Creator and his works. . . . But whether all things were made of some pre-existent matter, I have as yet nowhere read. Let the shop of Hermogenes show that it is written. If it is not written, let them fear that woe which is destined for them that add or take away" (10). Again, when disputing against the heretic

Marcion, he says—"I do not admit what you bring forward of your own, extraneous to Scripture." (11)

The next witness whom we shall cite is AMBROSE, the famous Bishop of Milan, who flourished c. A.D. 374. This eminent Father recognised no authority as co-ordinate with and independent of Scripture—"How," he says, "can we use those things which we find not in Scripture" (12)? And again—"I read [in Scripture] that he [Christ] is the first, I read that he is not the second; let those who say he is the second, prove it by reading" (13).

Contemporaneously with Ambrose lived JEROME, unquestionably the most learned theologian of the Western Church. He thus expresses himself respecting the grounds upon which his belief was founded—"As we deny not those things that are written, so we reject those things that are not written" (14). The instance which he gives is peculiarly worthy of attention, when taken in connection with the various purely traditional notions entertained by the Church of Rome of the Virgin Mary—"That God was born of a virgin we believe, because we read it. That Mary married after she gave birth to Him, we do not believe, because we read it not" (15).

A few years later—that is, towards the close of the fourth century—we come to AUGUSTINE. The writings of this Father have been always held in the highest esteem in the Western Church, and the Church of Rome, in particular, has ever regarded them with especial reverence. What, then, is Augustine's opinion on the point under discussion? "In those things," he says, "which are plainly laid down in Scripture, all things are found which embrace faith and morals" (16). Again—"Whatever ye shall hear thence—i. e., from Scripture—let this savour well with you: whatever is extraneous to it reject, lest ye wander in a cloud" (17). Again—"Wherefore if, concerning Christ, or his Church, or anything else whatsoever pertaining to your faith and living, I do not say we (who are not to be compared to him, who said—'Although we,' &c.—Gal. i. 8), but even, as St Paul adds, 'an angel from heaven were to preach to you ought besides (præterquam) what you have received in the legal and evangelical Scriptures [the Old and the New Testaments], let him be accursed" (18). It should be particularly observed, that Augustine is here not condemning the inculcation of doctrine contrary to Scripture, but in addition to it ("præterquam quod in Scripturis accepistis") (19). Will any candid Roman Catholic say, that the above is the language of one who believed, as the Council of Trent teaches (20), that there are Church-traditions, respecting faith and morals, not contained in Scripture, and which are to be received with the same sentiments of piety and virtue as the Scriptures themselves? If more evidence be required, the same Father elsewhere says—"Those things, however, which appertain to the investigation and preserving of true religion, Divine Scripture is not silent about" (21). Again, speaking of the confutation of heresy, he says—"There can

be no proof of true Christianity, nor can there be any other refuge of Christians wishing to know the truth of the faith, except the Divine Scriptures". And, to quote no more, writing against the Donatists, he says—"Let them demonstrate their Church, if they can, not by discourses and rumours of the Africans, not by Councils of their own bishops, not by the writings of any disputants whatsoever, not by deceitful signs and wonders, against which we have been prepared and warned by the Word of the Lord, but by the words of the one Shepherd himself, and all the canonical authorities of the Sacred Books" (22). This remarkable passage is deserving of all attention from Roman Catholics.

Such are a few of the testimonies of the early Latin Fathers in favour of the Rule of Faith for which Protestants contend. When we turn to the Eastern Church we find, if possible, even stronger statements upon the point.

CLEMENT of Alexandria, celebrated as one of the founders of the famous school of Alexandria, and the master of the renowned Origen, thus writes towards the close of the 2nd century—"They who are ready to labour for what is most excellent, will not desist in their search after truth till they obtain demonstration from the Scriptures themselves" (23).

ORIGEN, the successor of Clement, in the beginning of the 3rd century, says—"In the two Testaments every word that appertaineth unto God may be sought and discussed, and out of them all knowledge of things may be derived. But if anything remains which Divine Scripture does not determine, no other third Scripture ought to be received to authorize knowledge . . . but let us commit to the fire what remains—that is, let us reserve it for God. For God has not willed that we should know all things in the present life" (24). Could Origen have written thus if he had entertained the opinions put forward by Bellarmine respecting Tradition, which obviously represent it as a third Scripture? Again,—"Wherefore it is necessary for us to call the Sacred Scriptures to give evidence: for our meanings and interpretations, without these witnesses, have no credit" (25).

HYPOLYTUS the martyr, a contemporary and friend of Origen, and a disciple of Irenæus, thus writes—"As he who would desire to exercise the wisdom of this world cannot otherwise attain it, unless he read the dogmas of the philosophers: so, whosoever of us will exercise piety towards God can learn it from no other source than from the Divine Scriptures" (26).

ATHANASIUS, the famous Bishop of Alexandria, in the beginning of the fourth century, expresses himself as follows:—"The holy and divinely-inspired Scriptures are sufficient for the enunciation of truth" (27). Again—"These [canonical books] are the fountains of salvation, so that he who thirsts may be satisfied with the oracles contained in them; in these alone the school of religion preaches the gospel; let no man add to or take from them." (28) These are the words of the man who spent his life in controversy with the Arians, and who was the great head of the Catholic party at the Œcumenical Synod of Nice. He obviously knew nothing of Traditions which were at the same time necessary to salvation and not contained in Scripture.

\* "Nulla probatio potest esse veræ Christianitatis, neque refugium potest esse Christianorum aliud, volentium cognoscere fidei veritatem, nisi scripturæ sacræ."—August. de Pastorib. c. 12., t. ix., 279.

(22) Ecclesiæ suam demonstrent, si possunt, non in sermonibus et rumoribus Afrorum, non in conciliis episcoporum suorum, non in literis quorumlibet disputatorum, non in signis et prodigiis fallacibus, quia etiam contra ista verbo Domini preparati et cauti redditi sumus, sed in ipsis unius Pastoris vocibus, in omnibus canonicis sanctorum librorum auctoritatibus.—August. de Unit. Eccles., c. 16., t. ix., 371. This is quite in harmony with what he says in the 3d chap. of the same treatise—"Nolo humanis documentis sed divinis oraculis sanctam ecclesiæ demonstrari."

(23) ἀλλ' οἱ πονεῖν ἐτοιμοὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς καλλίστοις οὐ πρότερον ἀποστήσονται ζητοῦντες τὴν ἀληθειαν πρὶν ἂν τὴν ἀπόδειξιν ἀπ' αὐτῶν λάβωσι τῶν γραφῶν.—Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. vii. p. 889, Ed. Potter.

(24) "In hoc biduo puto deo Testamenta posse intelligi, in quibus liceat omne verbum quod ad Deum pertinet requiri et discuti, atque ex ipsis omnem rerum scientiam capi. Si quid autem superferat, quod non Divina Scriptura decernat, nullam aliam tertiam Scripturam debere ad auctoritatem scientiæ suscipi. . . . Sed quoniam tradimus quod superest, id est, Deo reservemus. Neque enim in præsentia vita Deus scire nos omnia voluit."—Origen, Homil. v., in Levit. t. ii. 212.

(25) "Quapropter necesse nobis est Scripturas sanctas in testimonium vocare: sensus quippe nostri et enarrationes, sine his testibus, non habent fidem."—Orig. Hom. i. in Jer.

(26) "Quemadmodum enim, si quis vellet sapientiam hujus sæculi exercere, non aliter hoc consequi poterit, nisi dogmata philosophorum legat; sic quicumque volumus pietatem in Deum exercere, non aliunde discemus quam ex Scripturis sacris."—Hippolyt. Adv. Noetum, c. ix.

(27) Ἀταρκείας μὲν γὰρ εἰσὶν αἱ ἅγιοι καὶ θεόπνευστοι γραφαὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας ἀπαγγελίαν.—Athan. Cont. Gentes, t. i. l. Ed. Bened.

(28) Ταῦτα [βιβλία] πᾶσι τοῦ σωτηρίου, ὥστε τὸν διψῶντα ἐμφορεῖσθαι τῶν ἐν τοῖς λογίοις ἐν τοῖς μόνον τῷ τῆς εὐσεβείας διδασκαλίων εὐαγγελιζέται· μηδεὶς τούτους ἐπιβαλλέτω, μηδὲ τούτων ἀφαιρέσθω. Ex festali Epistola xxxix., t. ii., 962.

(11) Non recipio quod extra Scripturam de tuo profers. De Carn. Chris. c. 7.

(12) Quæ in Scripturis sanctis non reperimus, ea quemadmodum usurpare possumus?—Ambr. Offic. Lib. i. c. 23.

(13) Lego quia primus est, lego quia non est secundus. Illi qui secundum aiunt, doceant lectorem.—De Inst. Virg. c. 2.

(14) Ut hæc quæ scripta sunt non negamus, ita ea quæ non sunt scripta reuimus. Hieron. adv. Pelvid. Tom. iv. pars. ii. p. 141.

(15) Natum Deum esse de Virgine credimus, quia legimus. Mariam nupsisse post partum non credimus, quia non legimus.—l. c.

(16) In iis, quæ aperte in Scripturâ posita sunt, inveniuntur illa omnia quæ continent fidem moresque vivendi.—August. de doctr. Christ. Lib. ii., c. 9. T. iii., 301. Ed. Bened.

(17) Quicquid inde audieritis, hæc vobis bene sapiat: quicquid extra est respicite, ne erretis in nebula.—August. Serm. de Pastor. c. xi., t. v., 238.

(18) Proinde sive de Christo, sive de ejus Ecclesia, sive de quacunque alia re quæ pertinet ad fidem vitamque vestram, non dicam nos (nequaquam comparandi ei qui dixit Licet si nos), sed omnino (quod secutus adjecit) si angelus de celo vobis annuntiaverit præterquam quod in Scripturis legalibus et evangelicis accepistis, anathema sit.—August. Cont. Petilium, Lib. iii., c. 6. T. ix., 301.

(19) The Rhemish translators correctly render the Greek παρ' ὃ in the 8th and 9th verses by "besides." But whilst they felt themselves constrained to follow the Vulgate version (præterquam quod, præter id quod) they take care to inform their readers, in their note, that, according to St. Augustine, what St. Paul here condemns is "such teaching as is contrary and disagreeing to the rule of faith." Now, this remark is not only at variance with the words of Augustine above cited, but even to the very passage of that Father, to which they themselves refer, where he says—"qui autem prætergreditur fidei regulam, non accedit in via, sed recedit de via."—August. Tract. in Johan. xcviii., 7. We may add, that Theophylact and Œcumenius, in their commentaries on this passage of the Galatians, are also directly opposed to this Rhemish gloss. With respect to the Greek παρ' ὃ there seems to be no doubt that the correct translation is besides or more than, as the Rhemish translators themselves render it again in Rom. xii. 3.

(20) See the Decretum de Can. Scrip., quoted in our June number, p. 61.

(21) Quæ tament pertinent ad veram religionem querendam et tenendam, divina Scriptura non tacet.—August. Ep. 42.

\* Augustine thought as we do on this subject of patristic authority. "Other authors," he says, "however excellent their sanctity and learning, I read so as not to credit their assertions merely because they say thus: but because they have been able to persuade me, either by means of those Canonical authors or by probable reasons, that their statements are not repugnant to truth."—August. ad Hieron. t. ii. 15. Ed. Bened.

(6) "When they [the heretics] are confuted out of the Scriptures, they turn round and accuse the Scriptures themselves, as if they were not accurate, nor of authority, and because they are ambiguous, and because the truth cannot be discovered from them by those who are ignorant of Tradition: for that the truth was not delivered in writing but orally." (Cum enim ex Scripturis arguuntur, in accusationem convertuntur ipsarum Scripturarum, quasi non recte habeant, neque sint ex auctoritate, et quia varie sint dictæ, et quia non possit ex his inveniri veritas ab his qui nesciant Traditionem: non enim per litteras traditam illam, sed per vivam vocem.—Cont. Hær. Lib. iii. c. 2.) It is scarcely necessary to direct attention to the truly remarkable resemblance here exhibited between the respective positions taken up by the Gnostic heretics and Irenæus upon the one hand, and those occupied by Roman Catholics and the Church of England on the other.

(7) Cedere hæc debemus Deo qui et nos fecit, rectissime scientes quia Scripturæ quidem perfectæ sunt, quippe a Verbo Dei et Spiritu eius dictæ.—Cont. Hær. Lib. ii. c. 47.

(8) Non enim per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cognovimus, quam per eos per quos Evangelium pervenit ad nos: quod quidem tunc præconaverunt, postea vero per Dei voluntatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt, fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futurum.—Lib. iii. c. 1.

(9) Legite diligentius id quod ab Apostolis est evangelium prædictum, et legite diligentius Prophetas, et invenietis universam actionem, et omnem doctrinam, et omnem passionem Domini nostri prædictam in ipsis.—Lib. iv. c. 34. The meaning obviously is, that in the Gospel the general tenor of our Lord's actions and the whole of his doctrines were exhibited; whilst the prophets predicted all the circumstances connected with his passion.

(10) Adore Scripturæ plenitudinem quæ mihi et Factorem manifestat et facta. An autem de aliqua subiacenti materia facta sint omnia, nusquam adhuc legi. Scriptum esse doceat Hermogenis officina. Si non est scriptum, timeat Væ illud adjicientibus aut detrahentibus destinatum.—Tertull. Adv. Hermog. c. 22.

CYRIL, Bishop of Jerusalem, in the middle of the fourth century, after having given a summary of the doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit, says that he will now prove it in detail from Scripture—"For," he adds, "concerning the divine and holy mysteries of the faith, even the most casual remark ought not to be delivered without the Sacred Scriptures. Do not implicitly believe me saying these things to you unless you receive proof of the statements from the Sacred Scriptures" (30). Again, speaking of the mode of the divine generation not being revealed in Scripture, he says—"Why, then, do you busy yourself about what the Holy Spirit has not written in the Scriptures" (31)?

BASIL the Great, Bishop of Caesarea, and one of the most profound theologians of his age (cir. A.D. 370), thus writes—"Believe those things that are written; the things which are not written seek not" (31). And again—"It is a manifest falling away from the faith, and a charge of arrogance either to reject anything of what is written, or to introduce anything of what is not written" (32). We shall quote one passage more, as Basil is one of the authorities on whom Roman Catholic divines rely most in support of Tradition. "Let, therefore, the inspired Scripture arbitrate between us; and the sentence of truth shall be adjudged to those with whom are found doctrines consonant to the Divine oracles" (33). From these words it appears that, according to Basil, Scripture and the Divine Oracles are one and the same thing; and that in every question their authority is supreme.

THEOPHILUS, Bishop of Alexandria towards the close of the fourth century, believed it to be "an instinct of the devil to follow the sophisms of human minds, and to think anything Divine without the authority of the Scriptures" (34). Roman Catholics will, of course, assent to the first clause of this sentence; but could the Tridentine Fathers, who asserted the existence of Divine traditions not contained in Scripture, fairly subscribe to the second?

GREGORY, Bishop of Nyssa, and brother of Basil, declares—"Forasmuch as this is supported by no testimony of Scripture, we will reject it as false" (35).

CYRIL, Bishop of Alexandria in the beginning of the fifth century, to the very same effect asks—"That which Holy Scripture hath not said, by what means, pray, shall we receive and reckon it among those things that are true" (36)? The force of the last two passages cannot be evaded by saying that they relate to things with which Tradition had nothing to do (37). The writers would scarcely have expressed themselves so absolutely had they been aware of the existence in their own day of a source of proof equally certain and authoritative as Scripture, and yet independent of it.

CHRYSOSTOM, the famous Bishop of Constantinople, towards the close of the fifth century, thus speaks of Holy Scripture—"Look for no other teacher; thou hast the oracles of God, none teaches thee like these." (38) Is there any doubt here as to the sufficiency of Scripture? And again—"He who useth not the Scriptures, but climbeth up some other way—that is, cutteth off for himself another and an unlawful way—he is a thief" (39). Roman Catholics think it enough

to reply, that Chrysostom is here speaking of Antichrists and heretics. Certainly; but what he condemns them for is not adhering solely to Scripture. Had he or they heard of the existence in the Church of Divine traditions not contained in Scripture, would he have ventured thus to apply the words "ἀναβαίνων ἀλλὰ χόθεν"? Once more—"Wherefore, I exhort and beseech you all, leaving aside what this man or that man thinks concerning these things, to learn all these things from the Scriptures" (40).

The above passages, taken from some of the most eminent writers of the first five centuries, may serve to convey a general idea of the light in which Holy Scripture, as the ultimate and sufficient basis of all essential truth, was regarded by the early Church. The ingenuity of controversialists has, in various ways, endeavoured to elude the direct force of some of those statements; but the general impression which they leave upon every unbiassed mind, no sophistry or special pleading can efface. Nor will that impression be impaired even after we have brought forward (as we shall do, when stating the Roman Catholic side of the argument) other passages from the same or different Fathers, in which the use and authority of Tradition are dwelt on. For it will, we trust, appear perfectly obvious, first that the Tridentine notion of Tradition, as an authoritative source of essential truths not contained in Scripture, was utterly unknown to the ancient Church; and, secondly, that even with respect to *inhesive* truths (i. e. doctrines either expressly or implicitly contained in Scripture), the first and last appeal was made to the written Word, the evidence of Church-Tradition being referred to either as subordinate and simply corroborative; or else in controversy with heretics, who questioned the authenticity of the orthodox Scriptures; or, finally, under other very special circumstances.

But the chain of evidence in favour of the Protestant rule of faith does not terminate with the fifth, or indeed with any, century of the Church's history. We have upon our side the testimony of some of the greatest theologians of every age. For instance, JOHANNES DAMASCENUS, the great oracle of the Eastern Church in the eighth century, thus writes—"All things that are delivered to us by the Law, the Prophets, the Apostles, and the Evangelists, we receive, acknowledge and reverence, seeking for nothing beyond these" (41). In the beginning of the 15th century, the famous GERSON, Chancellor of the University of Paris, and the most learned man of his time, thus expresses himself—"In the examination of doctrines, the first and chief thing to be attended to is if the doctrine be conformable to Holy Scripture, since Scripture has been delivered to us, as a sufficient and infallible rule, for the government of the whole ecclesiastical body and its members, to the end of the world. It is, therefore, such an art, such a rule or exemplar, that any other doctrine which is not conformable to it is either to be rejected as heretical, or is to be accounted altogether suspicious, or not pertaining to religion." (42) This is precisely the doctrine of the Church of England in her sixth article.

Nay, more, it is an unquestionable fact, that in the Council of Trent itself, the opinions of the prelates were not unanimous respecting the famous decree, so often referred to, which placed Tradition on an equality with Scripture. The Bishops of Fano and Chioggia especially protested against this decree; and the latter went so far as to exclaim that it was impious to elevate Tradition to the level of Scripture (43). Even in that very assembly,

(40) διό παρακαλῶ καὶ δεῖται πάντων ὑμῶν, ἀφέντες τὴν τῶν δεινῶν καὶ τῶν δεινῶν δοκίαν περὶ τούτων, παρὰ τῶν γραφῶν ταῦτα ἀπαντᾶ πυνθάνεσθαι.—Chrys. Hom. ix. in Coloss. cap. 3.

(41) Πάντα τὰ παραδεδομένα ἡμῖν διὰ τὸ νόμον καὶ προφητῶν καὶ ἀποστόλων καὶ εὐαγγελιστῶν δεχόμεθα καὶ γινώσκουμεν καὶ σέβομεν, οὐδὲν περαιτέρω τούτων ἐπιζητούμεν.—Joh. Damasc. de Orthod. Fide, c. i.

(42) "Attendendum in examinatione doctrinarum, primo et principaliter, si doctrina sit conformis Scripturæ quoniam Scriptura nobis tradita est tanquam regula sufficiens et infallibilis, pro regimine totius ecclesiastici corporis et membrorum, usque in finem seculi. Est igitur talis ars, talis regula vel exemplar, cui se non conformans alia doctrina vel abicienda est ut hereticalis, aut suspecta, aut impertinens ad religionem prorsus est habenda."—Gerson, de Exam. Doctr., pars. ii. con. 1.

(43) "This equality [sc. of Scripture and Tradition] was not approved of by some, and especially by Bertano (Bishop of Fano). For, he argued, although both might proceed from God, from whom all truths are ultimately derived, yet it did not follow that everything true should be regarded with the same veneration as the Sacred Scriptures. That, inasmuch as some traditions had failed, it was obvious that God was unwilling that so much stability, and, consequently, so much veneration, should be attributed to them as to Scripture. Nachianti, Bishop of Chioggia, inveighed still more bitterly against an equality of this kind, Traditions being considered by him not as Divine revelations but as [human] laws, the weight of which he deemed insupportable. He exclaimed, when the question of their universal adoption was proposed, that that equality between the Sacred Writings and Traditions appeared to him impious." Pallavicino *Historia del Concil. di Trento*. lib. vi. cap. 3. d. The other bishops, more true to the principles of their Church, heard this protest, we are told, with wonder and horror; and, accordingly, he who had dared to vindicate the supreme

whose avowed object was to condemn the so-called heresies of the Reformers, there were found men honest and bold enough to proclaim and defend what had been the unquestioned doctrine of the Catholic Church during many ages, and had never ceased to be held by many of its greatest ornaments. Roman Catholics, and even Protestants themselves, seem to take it for granted, as a matter of course, that the decrees of the Council of Trent were passed with the full concurrence of all its members, and that the characteristic dogmas of the modern Church of Rome were then regarded as established verities, which only needed the authority of the Church to sanction them as essential to salvation. The fact, however, is far otherwise: many of those dogmas were then open questions, about which great diversity of opinion existed. But as any appearance of such diversity, in the formal definitions of the Council, would have furnished the "heretics" with a powerful argument against what they maintained to be innovations on the doctrines of the Primitive Church, it was arranged that, before each session, general Congregations should be held, in which the decrees to be proposed should be discussed, and the opinions of the prelates taken upon them; it being understood that whatever was decided upon by the majority, in those preliminary meetings, should be passed in the following session, with the unanimous consent of the Council, the dissentient minority tacitly acquiescing in the previous decision. (44) Such was the mode in which Tradition was placed upon a level with the written Word of God by the unanimous consent of the Catholic Church, as represented by the "Sacred, Ecumenical, Synod of Trent."

We have now closed the case on the part of the United Church of England and Ireland. We have given a very brief, and, we are fully conscious, a very imperfect sketch of some of the arguments by which the sixth article of that Church may be vindicated. We have endeavoured to state the case with all fairness, not as mere advocates, but as honest and earnest inquirers after the truth. In the same spirit we shall proceed, in a future number, to exhibit the Roman Catholic side of the question, and to adduce our reasons for excepting to the proofs which the ablest divines of that communion have alleged in support of the Tridentine "Decree concerning the Canonical Scriptures."

#### A FEW WORDS ON THE JUBILEE.

It has lately been made public in the newspapers, that "a jubilee" was granted last November, by the present Pope, and has commenced in Dublin on the first of this month. To understand fully the nature of the benefits supposed to be conveyed by a jubilee, it is necessary to be acquainted with the doctrine of indulgences. On this subject we purpose elsewhere to give some explanation (see p. 115); but it may also be interesting to our readers if we give a short historical account of the jubilees that have already taken place.

Whatever be the benefits conferred by a jubilee, it appears that the church did without them for thirteen centuries, since the first jubilee of which we have any authentic account was granted by Pope Boniface VIII. in the year 1300. In that year a report got into circulation, whose authority could not be ascertained, but which was soon extensively believed, that it was an ancient law of the church that those who devoutly visited St. Peter's church, in the years which terminate centuries, merited thereby indulgences for a hundred years. So many strangers came to Rome, we are told, in consequence of this rumour, that the Pope was moved to inquire into the matter. He obtained the testimony of four aged persons to the truth of the report; one of whom, being of the age of 107, testified that when he was a child, in the year 1200, his father had gone up to Rome, and lived there as long as his means permitted, and that on his return he had told him, if he lived to the year 1300, to be sure also to go up to Rome, to enjoy the same spiritual advantages. By this evidence the Pope professed himself convinced, and published an epistle deciding that in every centennial year those who should

authority of Holy Scripture was compelled to acquiesce in the decree which directly denied it.

(44) "The 8th of February, Cardinal del Monte [afterwards Pope Julius III.], held a congregation, wherein he desired the Fathers of the Council to remember the prayer he had formerly made to them, not to give their opinions anew in the sessions, upon the decrees that were published there; since those decrees having been passed in the congregations by a majority of voices, this would only serve, as he had formerly told them, to give the heretics an occasion of talking, when they should see that the decrees that were published in the sessions were contradicted by the Fathers of the Council themselves."—Du Pin. *Eccles. Hist.* 16th cent. Vol. III. lib. iii. ch. 1. In the discussions which took place in the subsequent congregations respecting the four articles that were extracted from Luther's writings, Antonio Marinari, a Carmelite, with reference to the first of these articles expressed himself of opinion that Traditions should not be spoken of at all, and that "it would be better to imitate the ancient Fathers, who had always made use of Scripture alone, except in cases of necessity, without ever daring to put Tradition in competition with it."—P. Sarpi. *Hist. du Conc. de Trente* liv. ii. ch. 46. Edit. Courayer. Cardinal Pallavicino attempts to throw discredit on this statement of Sarpi, but there seems to be no just ground for calling it in question.

(29) δὲ γὰρ περὶ τῶν θείων καὶ ἁγίων τῆς πίστεως μυστηρίων μηδὲ τὸ τῶν ἀνεν τῶν θείων παραδιδόνθαι γραφῶν. . . . μηδὲ ἐμοὶ τῶ ταῦτά σοι λέγοντι ἀπλῶς πιστεύσας, ἐάν τιν ἀποδείξιν τῶν καταγγελλομένων ἀπὸ τῶν θείων μὴ λάβης γραφῶν.—Cyril. Hierosol. Catech. iv. 17.

(30) τί τοίνυν πολυπραγμονεῖς ἢ μηδὲ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον ἔγραψεν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς.—ib. xi. 12.

(31) τοῖς γεγραμμένοις πιστεύετε, τὰ μὴ γεγραμμένα μὴ ζητεῖτε.—Basil. Hom. xxix. Adv. Calumn. S. Trin. The Benedictine editors (t. ii. 611) put this into the Appendix of spurious passages; but it contains nothing that cannot be paralleled from contemporary writers (e.g., Cyril), and from Basil himself, as in the next extract.

(32) φανερά ἐκπτώσις πίστεως καὶ ὑπερηφανίας κατηγορία ἡ ἀθετεῖν τι τῶν γεγραμμένων ἢ ἐπιστάγειν τῶν μὴ γεγραμμένων.—Basil de Fide, c. i., t. ii, 251. Ed. Bened.

(33) ἡ θεόπνευστος ἡμῖν διαιτησάτω γραφή. Καὶ παρ' οἷς ἂν εὐρεθῇ τὰ δόγματα συνωδὰ τοῖς θείοις λόγοις, ἐπὶ τοῖς οὗτοις ἤξει τῆς ἀληθείας ἡ ψῆφος.—Basil. Ep. 80, t. ii., p. 901.

(34) Ignorans [Origenes] quod demoniaci spiritus esset instinctus sophismata humanarum mentium sequi, et aliquid extra scripturam auctoritatem putare divinum.—Theoph. Alex. Ep. Pasch. ii.

(35) Cum id nullo scripture testimonio fultum sit, ut falsum improbamus.—Lib. de Cognit. Dei, cit. ab Euthymio in Panoplia, pars I. tit. viii. n. 4.

(36) ὁ γὰρ οὐκ εἶρκεν ἡ θεία γραφή, τίνα δὲ τρόπον παραδεχόμεθα, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀληθῶς ἐχουσί καταλογισμέθα;—Cyril. Alex. Glaph. in Gen. lib. ii.

(37) Perrone loc. theol. Pars ii., sec. ii., c. 1.

(38) μηδὲ περιμένοντες ἔτερον διδάσκαλον ἔχεις τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ. οὐδεὶς σε διδάσκει ὡς ἐκεῖνα.—Chrysost. Hom. ix. in Ep. Coloss.

(39) ὁ γὰρ μὴ ταῖς γραφαῖς χρώμενος, ἀλλὰ ἐναβαίνων ἀλλὰ χόθεν, τωτῶστιν ἐτέραν ἐαυτοῦ καὶ μὴ νομιζομένην τέμνων ὁδόν, κλέπτεις ἐστίν.—Chrys. Hom. lix. in Joh.